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In the United States Patent and Trademark Office

Appellants: M.T. Cammarota; M.P. Jordan; M. Docket No.: 14,966.1
Lee; G.A. McDonald; K.I. Ratliff

Serial No.: 09/928,785 Group: 3761

Filed: August 13, 2001 Examiner: Jamisue A. Webb

For: Absorbent Articles Having Wetness Date: July 7, 2003
Indicating Graphics Incorporating A
Training Zone

Appeal Brief Transmittal Letter

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner For Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.192, transmitted herewith in triplicate is an Appeal Brief pursuant to the Notice of Appeal which was mailed on May 7, 2003.

Please charge the \$320.00 fee, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.17(c), which is due to Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc. deposit account number 11-0875. This Appeal Brief Transmittal Letter is submitted in duplicate.

Respectfully submitted,

MARK T. CAMMAROTA ET AL.

By: Thomas M. Gage

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I, Mary L. Roberts, hereby certify that on July 7, 2003 this document is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

By: Mary L. Roberts

Mary L. Roberts



In the United States Patent and Trademark Office

Appellants: Mark T. Cammarota et al. Docket No.: 14,966.1
Serial No.: 09/928,785 Group: 3761
Confirmation No: 8428 Examiner: Jamisue A. Webb
Filed: August 13, 2001 Date: July 7, 2003
For: Absorbent Articles Having
Wetness Indicating Graphics
Incorporating A Training Zone

Brief on Appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences

HONORABLE COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

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TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.192 Appellants respectfully submit this Brief in support of their Appeal of Examiner Jamisue A. Webb's **Continued Rejection** of claims 1 – 24, 26, 30, 31 and 38 – 40 which was mailed on January 28, 2003.

On April 28, 2003, Appellants, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.191 mailed a timely Notice of Appeal. The Notice of Appeal was received in the U.S.P.T.O. and postmarked May 5, 2003. Thus, the time period for filing this Brief expired on Saturday, July 5, 2003. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.7, this Brief is being timely filed on the next succeeding day which is not a Saturday, Sunday or Federal holiday.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.192(a) this Appeal Brief is filed in triplicate.

Real Party in Interest

Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc., the assignee of the present patent application, is the real party in interest. Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Kimberly-Clark Corporation.

Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1 – 24, 26, 30, 31 and 38 – 40 stand continually rejected and form the basis for this appeal. A copy of the claims on appeal is set forth in the Appendix.

Status of Amendments Filed Subsequent to Final Rejection

No amendments were filed after the Office Action mailed January 28, 2003.

Summary

Figures from the application are provided in an Exhibit hereto for ease of reference.

The invention relates to an absorbent article “that provides toilet training aid benefits through the use of interactive graphics and graphics that inform the caregiver and child when an accident has occurred. The interactive graphics can include a permanent character graphic and the wetness indicating graphics can include one or more active object graphics. The object graphics are referred to as ‘active’ because they are constructed to ‘disappear’ or ‘appear’ from view” Application, pg. 2, lines 9-19; see also pg. 3, lines 16-25. In contrast to an “active graphic,” the term “permanent graphic” refers to “a graphic that does not substantially change its degree of visibility when the absorbent article is insulted with urine and when the absorbent article is exposed to the environment, in simulated use conditions.” Pg. 5, lines 17-20

“The wetness indicating graphic may allow the caregiver to interact with the child and teach the child important lessons regarding toilet training.” Pg. 2, lines 21-23. Desirably, the character graphic can represent a well-known character from popular media. “The character graphic may be extremely useful in order to enhance the child’s interest in the product, particularly where the caregiver interacts with the child positively about the character graphic.” Pg. 2, lines 28-31. Nevertheless, the creator of the character graphic may desire that the image of the character not be directly related to the toilet training process. Pg. 2, lines 28-31. Accordingly, the permanent character graphic can be conceptually and/or visually separated from the interactive wetness indicating graphic. Pg. 2, lines 20-21.

By way of illustration, Figure 1 depicts a training pant 20 including “a permanent character graphic 60 in the form of a dog having human-like expressions and wearing a shirt and a hat, a permanent object graphic 62 in the form of an automobile, a visual segmentation element 64, and a plurality of active object graphics 66 representing stars. The dog 60 is illustrated to be involved in an activity or action, namely driving, utilizing the automobile 62.” Pg. 25, lines 3-8.

To promote conceptual and/or visual separation between the permanent character graphic 60 and the active object graphics 66, the dog 60 and automobile 62 are unrelated in subject matter with the stars 66, and the dog and automobile are interactively unrelated to the stars. The visual segmentation element 64 further distinguishes the permanent character graphic 60 from the active object graphics 66. The visual segmentation element 64 is disposed on the outer cover 40, with at least a portion of the visual segmentation element disposed between the permanent character graphic 60 and the active object graphics 66. The visual segmentation element 64 of the illustrated embodiment comprises a segmentation graphic that substantially surrounds both the dog 60 and the automobile 62. The illustrated segmentation graphic is the outline of a stop sign, which is related in subject matter to the activity of the character graphic.

When the child wets the training pant 20, liquid is communicated to the active object graphics 66, whereupon the object graphics either dissolve, change color, appear, or the like. For fading graphics, the stars 66 can “disappear” upon contact with urine. Where appearing graphics are employed, the situation would work in reverse and the stars 66 would “appear” upon liquid insult. Alternatively, the active object graphics 66 can comprise appearing graphics that are triggered upon use by exposure to the environment.

Pg. 25, line 28 through pg. 26, line 14. Additional embodiments of the present invention are illustrated in Figures 3-8.

The Issues Presented

1. Is claim 1 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b)?
2. Are claims 1-10 and 13-19 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e)?
3. Are claims 1-20, 24, 30-31 and 38-39 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)?
4. Are claims 21, 23 and 40 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)?
5. Are claims 1-3, 22 and 26 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)?

Grouping of the Claims

For Issue 1, claim 1 is the sole claim.

For Issue 2, claims 1-10 and 13-19 stand or fall as a group.

For Issue 3, claims 1-20, 24, 30-31 and 38-39 stand or fall as a group.

For Issue 4, claims 21, 23 and 40 stand or fall as a group.

For Issue 5, claims 1-3, 22 and 26 stand or fall as a group.

Argument

1. Is claim 1 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b)?

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,022,211 issued May 10, 1977 to Timmons et al. (hereinafter “Timmons”). Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection should be reversed because Timmons does not disclose a “character graphic,” as that term is defined in the specification.

Timmons discloses in Figures 5 and 6 a decorative pattern where part of the original pattern disappears when wetted. Col. 3, lines 41-44. The pattern includes outlines 22 of blocks and alphabet letters printed on the blocks. Col. 3, lines 44-52. The outlines 22 are printed in a permanent ink or dye, and the letters are printed with a water-dispersible or water-soluble coloring agent 16b.

The Examiner correctly pointed out that the MPEP states, in part, that the broadest reasonable interpretation of the claim is given during examination. Office Action, pgs. 8-9. However, the complete statement from MPEP section 2173.05(a) is as follows:

During patent examination, the pending claims must be given the broadest reasonable interpretation ***consistent with the specification***... (emphasis added; citations omitted)

This section of the MPEP continues and states that “[i]f the claims, read in light of the specification, reasonably apprise those skilled in the art both of the utilization and scope of the invention, and if the language is as precise as the subject matter permits, the statute (35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph) demands no more.” Because the term “character graphic” is adequately defined in the specification so that one skilled in the art of absorbent articles would reasonably be apprised of the scope and utilization of the invention based on the claim, the claim must be examined using the definition recited in the specification.

MPEP section 2173.05(a) also supports Appellants' position that the Examiner cannot ignore the defined meaning of "character graphic":

When the specification states the meaning that a term in the claim is intended to have, the claim is examined using that meaning... (emphasis added; citations omitted)

Appellants have defined a "character graphic" at pg. 6, line 10 of the specification as "a graphic containing an anthropomorphous image, and in particular an image having or suggesting human form or appearance which ascribes human motivations, characteristics, or behavior to inanimate objects, animals, natural phenomena, cartoon characters, or the like."

It appears to Appellants that the Examiner is taking a broad interpretation of the word "character" and ignoring the defined term "**character graphic**" which is recited in claim 1.

For example, the Examiner states: "It is obvious to have characters, such as those found on a keyboard, to be on diapers (as disclosed in the rejection), therefore it is the examiner's position that it would be reasonable to interpret the word **character** to be a letter of the alphabet." Office Action pg. 9 (emphasis added).

In violation of the MPEP sections quoted above, the Examiner has ignored the term "**character graphic**" and its definition provided in the specification: one of ordinary skill in the art would understand from the term and the definition in the specification that a character on a keyboard, without creative modification, is not a "**character graphic**."

Alphanumeric characters as displayed on a computer keyboard – or like the letters that make up this sentence – do not have or suggest human form or appearance and do not depict any sort of human motivations, characteristics or behavior. Only if the letters of the alphabet were depicted in such a way that they would have or suggest human form or appearance which ascribes human motivations, characteristics or behavior would they fall within the definition of a "character graphic."

The Examiner questioned whether a picture of a live dog or a bird would qualify as a "character graphic." Office Action, pg. 9. One need only review the definition of the term "character graphic" to know the answer: a picture of a live dog or bird, on their own, would not contain an anthropomorphous image, i.e., nothing suggesting human form or appearance which ascribes human motivations, characteristics or behavior. If instead, for example, the dog was given a shirt and a hat and was shown sitting up driving an automobile, such a depiction would clearly fall into the category of "character graphic." See attached Figure 1 of the application where a dog depicted as driving an automobile is not given human arms or legs, but is depicted in an act decidedly "non-dog-like" and is depicted with

human motivations, characteristics and behavior. This dog is shown sitting upright in an automobile wearing a baseball cap and grasping a steering wheel like a human would engage in such an activity.

The Examiner suggested that motivation could be eating, sleeping, walking, sitting or running. Office Action, pg. 9. Appellants agree with the Examiner, while pointing out that in defining "character graphic" the specification modifies the word "motivations" with the word "human". By way of example, a picture of a live dog sleeping would not constitute a "character graphic," but the depiction of a dog sleeping like a human would be a "character graphic." Perhaps such a dog could be depicted as wearing pajamas and lying under the covers of an elevated bed or some other creative depiction. This is merely one possible example. A creative product designer would only be limited by his or her imagination in coming up with such depictions which portray the dog with human motivations, characteristics or behavior in the place of canine motivations, characteristics or behavior. The same could be said for the motivations of eating, walking and running. A "character graphic" would depict such motivations in a way that is human in nature as compared to the natural behavior of the inanimate objects, animals, or natural phenomena being depicted.

In summary, alphanumeric symbols as displayed on a computer keyboard or illustrated in Timmons may constitute "**characters**," as the Examiner has used that term, but they would not constitute "**character graphics**" as Appellants have defined that term. The Examiner cannot abide by the mandate of MPEP 2173.05(a), requiring that "claims must be given the broadest reasonable interpretation **consistent with the specification**," by ignoring a definition in the specification.

Based on the foregoing, Appellants respectfully submit that Timmons fails to disclose a "character graphic" and accordingly the rejection to claim 1 should be reversed.

2. Are claims 1-10 and 13-19 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e)?

Claims 1-10 and 13-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,766,389 issued June 16, 1988 to Brandon et al. (hereinafter "Brandon"). Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection should be reversed because Brandon does not disclose an "active object graphic" as that term is defined in the specification.

Brandon discloses in Figure 1 a registered graphic 38. Beginning at col. 8, line 60, the patent states:

As illustrated in FIG. 1, a registered graphic 38 is selectively positioned on front panel 12, and in this illustration comprises a design of a simulated "fly opening 23", typical of a boy's underwear, and a rainbow, sun, clouds, and cars. The registered graphic 38 can be any type of desired pattern, artistic feature, written instructions, or the like, and is desired to be positioned in

the article at a selected location. Naturally, registered graphic 38 comprising a simulated fly opening 23 would be totally unacceptable from an aesthetic and/or functional view point if it were located at crotch panel 16 or back panel 14.

Referring to FIG. 2, another training pant 40 is illustrated, which can be typically used for young girls. In this design, a registered graphic 42 includes simulated waist ruffles 29, simulated leg ruffles 31, a rainbow, sun, clouds, wagon and balloon. Again, any suitable design can be utilized for a training pant intended for use by young girls, so as to be aesthetically and/or functionally pleasing to them and the caregiver.

The Examiner correctly pointed out that the MPEP states, in part, that the broadest reasonable interpretation of the claim is given during examination. Office Action, pgs. 8-9. However, the complete statement from MPEP section 2173.05(a) is as follows:

During patent examination, the pending claims must be given the broadest reasonable interpretation ***consistent with the specification***... (emphasis added; citations omitted)

This section of the MPEP continues and states that “[i]f the claims, read in light of the specification, reasonably apprise those skilled in the art both of the utilization and scope of the invention, and if the language is as precise as the subject matter permits, the statute (35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph) demands no more.” Because the term “active object graphic” is adequately defined in the specification so that one skilled in the art of absorbent articles would reasonably be apprised of the scope and utilization of the invention based on the claims, the claims must be examined using the definition recited in the specification.

MPEP section 2173.05(a) also supports Appellants’ position that the Examiner cannot ignore the defined meaning of “active object graphic”:

When the specification states the meaning that a term in the claim is intended to have, the claim is examined using that meaning... (emphasis added; citations omitted)

Appellants have defined “active object graphics” at pg. 7, line 16 and pg. 2, line 14 of the specification: “object graphic’ is used herein to refer to a graphic representing an object or thing, which can include an inanimate object or a character graphic”; and “object graphics are referred to as ‘active’ because they are constructed to ‘disappear’ or ‘appear’ from view, particularly when the child has an accident and the active object graphic is contacted with urine, but also when the product is in use and the disappearance or appearance occurs over time as a result of exposure to the environment, such as molecules in the air.” These active graphics “may allow the caregiver to interact with the child and teach the child important lessons regarding toilet training.” Application pg. 2, lines 9-14 and 21-23.

In contradiction with the MPEP, it is clear that the Examiner has completely ignored Appellants' specification. The Office Action at pg. 10 states:

The word active describes something performing an action. Is [sic] the examiner's position that driving a car is an action, or someone walking is an action. Therefore Brandon disclosing [sic] something being active. And it is the examiner's position that it would be reasonable to interpret the word active graphic to be a picture of something "driving a car" and therefore Brandon discloses an active graphic.

Under the Examiner's unsupported personal definition of "active," the Examiner apparently considers the static image of a sun in Figure 1 of Brandon to be an active object graphic: "the sun rises and sets and therefore is considered to be active." Office Action at pg. 2.

The Examiner's interpretation of an "active graphic," quoted above, not only ignores the clear definition provided in the specification, but it also contradicts the clear definition provided in the specification! The graphics in Brandon are not "constructed to 'disappear' or 'appear' from view" when contacted with urine or exposed to the environment, as would be the case with an "active graphic" according to the present specification. The Examiner cannot abide by MPEP 2173.05(a), requiring that "claims must be given the broadest reasonable interpretation **consistent with the specification**," by ignoring a definition in the specification.

Based on the foregoing, Appellants respectfully submit that Brandon fails to disclose an "active object graphic" and accordingly the rejection to claims 1-10 and 13-19 should be reversed.

3. Are claims 1-20, 24, 30-31 and 38-39 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)?

Claims 1-20, 24, 30-31 and 38-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Brandon in view of Timmons. The Examiner posits that it "would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to add the wetness indicators of Timmons to the training pants of Brandon in order to provide a visual signal that the pad is wetted and assist in determining if a fresh pad is needed. (see Timmons, column 1)". Office Action, pg. 5.

Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection should be reversed because the Examiner has not established a case of *prima facie* obviousness. A person of ordinary skill in the art would not combine unrelated graphics from Brandon and Timmons as proposed by the Examiner.

The graphics shown in Brandon span substantially the full length and width of the front, back and crotch panels 12, 14 and 16. The graphics shown in Timmons span substantially the full length and width of the backing sheet 14. No skilled person would merely combine the graphics of Brandon and Timmons to create overlapping and obstructed images. Rather, if the skilled person were motivated to

include a wetness indicator on the type of pant disclosed by Brandon, that skilled person would be motivated to replace the graphics of Brandon with the graphics of Timmons. This does not result in the claimed invention.

Additionally, Timmons purposefully locates the graphics so they span substantially the full length and width of the backing sheet 14! Timmons discloses that a large coverage of coloring agent 16 allows the wearer to know the extent of the wetted area. Timmons, col. 3, lines 9-15 and 26-28. In Figure 6 of Timmons, which is reprinted below, the extent of wetness represented by dotted line 24 is communicated to someone looking at the diaper by the disappearance of letters in the blocks within that region 24.

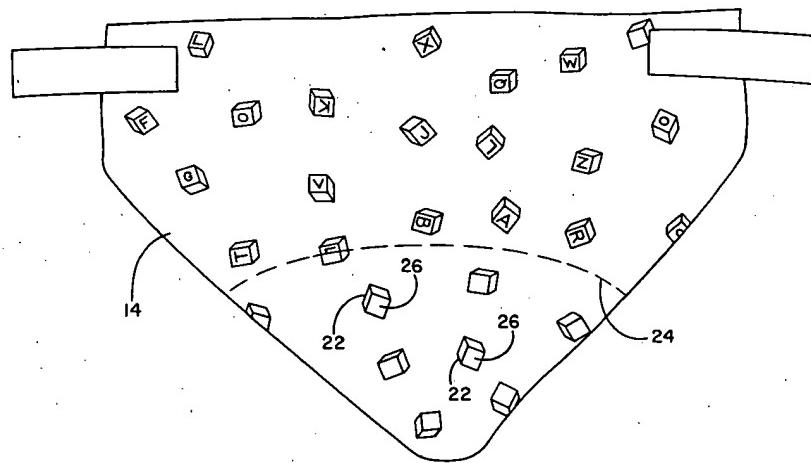


FIG. 6

This beneficial feature of Timmons would further motivate the skilled person to replace the graphics of Brandon with the graphics of Timmons, and replacing the graphics of Brandon with the graphics of Timmons does not result in the claimed invention.

The Examiner is picking certain elements of graphic design from one reference and combining them with other elements of graphic design from another reference in order to arrive at the present invention. The simple motivation of adding a wetness indicator to the pant of Brandon would not lead the skilled person to combine graphic design elements in the manner proposed by the Examiner. It is only with hindsight based on Appellants' specification that such picking and choosing becomes "obvious," and that is not permissible.

In summary, the mere desire to use a wetness indicator would not cause a skilled person to select unrelated graphics from different patents and combine them in a manner that disregards specific teachings and advantages of those patents in order to achieve the present invention. It is only with

resort to the present application that the skilled person would derive the present combination of elements.

Based on the foregoing, Appellants respectfully submit that the Examiner has not met her burden of establishing that claims 1-20, 24, 30-31 and 38-39 are *prima facie* obvious. Accordingly, this rejection should be reversed.

4. Are claims 21, 23 and 40 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)?

Dependent claims 21, 23 and 40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Brandon and Timmons as applied to claims 1-3 and 38 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,389,093 issued February 14, 1995 to Howell. Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection should be reversed for at least the reasons noted above in regard to the combination of Brandon and Timmons.

5. Are claims 1-3, 22 and 26 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)?

Claims 1-3, 22 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Brandon in view of U.S. Patent 5,766,212 issued June 16, 1998 to Jitoe et al. (hereinafter "Jitoe"). The Examiner contends that it "would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to add the wetness indicators of Jitoe to the training pants of Brandon in order for a mother to be reliably informed of a timing of a diaper exchange. (see Jitoe, column 3)". Office Action, page 8.

Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection should be reversed because the Examiner has not established a case of *prima facie* obviousness. A person of ordinary skill in the art would not combine unrelated graphics from Brandon and Jitoe as proposed by the Examiner.

Jitoe discloses a diaper including an indicator 18 "adapted to be visually revealed when the indicator 18 is wetted with urine so that display elements 19 can be visually recognized through the backsheet 3 and thereby the mother can be reliably informed of a timing for diaper exchange." Col. 3, lines 10-14. The indicator 18 is positioned in the front waist region 6 "by which occurrence of urine discharge is indicated to the mother of a diaper wearing baby." Col. 3, lines 6-10.

The graphics shown in Brandon span substantially the full length and width of the front, back and crotch panels 12, 14 and 16, and all depict a registered graphic 38 "selectively positioned on front panel 12 of the training pant 10." Brandon, col. 8, lines 60-63. The indicator graphics 18 shown in Jitoe are also centered in the front waist region 6. No skilled person would merely combine the graphics of

Brandon and Jitoe as suggested by the Examiner to create overlapping and obstructed images. Rather, if the skilled person were motivated to include a wetness indicator on the type of training pant disclosed by Brandon, that skilled person would be motivated to replace the graphics of Brandon with the graphics of Jitoe. Replacing the graphics of Brandon with the graphics of Jitoe does not result in the claimed invention.

The Examiner is picking certain elements of graphic design from one reference and combining them with other elements of graphic design from another reference in order to arrive at the present invention. Graphics for absorbent articles are not selected in a piecemeal and haphazard manner, as suggested by the Examiner. A designer incorporating multiple distinct graphics on an absorbent articles would consider their relation and interaction to one another. The simple motivation of adding a wetness indicator to the pant of Brandon would not lead the skilled person to combine graphic design elements in the manner proposed by the Examiner. It is only with hindsight based on Appellants' specification that such picking and choosing becomes "obvious," and that is not permissible.

The rejection to claims 1-3, 22 and 26 should be withdrawn for at least this reason. Appellants explicitly reserve the right to identify additional errors in the Office Action and advance further reasons for patentability should the present response not result in withdrawal of the rejection.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above it is Appellants' position that the Examiner's rejection of claims has been shown to be improper and should be **reversed** by the Board.

Please charge the \$320.00 fee, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.17(c), for filing this Appeal Brief to Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc. deposit account number 11-0875. Any additional prosecutorial fees which are due may also be charged to deposit account number 11-0875.

The undersigned may be reached at: (920) 721-3617.

Respectfully submitted,

MARK T. CAMMAROTA ET AL.

By: Thomas M. Gage
Thomas M. Gage
Registration No.: 33,385

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I, Mary L. Roberts, hereby certify that on July 7, 2003 this document is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Honorable Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

By: Mary L. Roberts
Mary L. Roberts

Appendix – The Claims On Appeal

The claims on appeal are:

1. An absorbent article comprising:
 - an outer cover having an interior surface and an opposite exterior surface;
 - an absorbent assembly disposed on the interior surface;
 - a permanent character graphic disposed on the outer cover; and
 - an active object graphic disposed on the outer cover, the permanent character graphic and the active object graphic being unrelated in subject matter.
2. An absorbent article comprising:
 - an outer cover having an interior surface and an opposite exterior surface;
 - an absorbent assembly disposed on the interior surface;
 - a permanent character graphic disposed on the outer cover, the permanent character graphic illustrated performing an activity or action; and
 - an active object graphic disposed on the outer cover, the permanent character graphic being interactively unrelated to the active object graphic.
3. An absorbent article comprising:
 - an outer cover having an interior surface and an opposite exterior surface;
 - an absorbent assembly disposed on the interior surface;
 - a permanent character graphic disposed on the outer cover;
 - an active object graphic disposed on the outer cover; and
 - a visual segmentation element disposed between the permanent character graphic and the active object graphic.
4. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, further comprising a permanent object graphic.
5. The absorbent article of claim 4, wherein the permanent character graphic is illustrated to be involved in an activity or action utilizing the permanent object graphic.
6. The absorbent article of claim 4, wherein the active object graphic is not related in subject matter to the permanent object graphic.

7. The absorbent article of claim 4, wherein the active object graphic is interactively unrelated to the permanent object graphic.
8. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, further comprising at least one visual segmentation element disposed on the outer cover and comprising a segmentation graphic that at least partially surrounds the permanent character graphic.
9. The absorbent article of claim 8, wherein the segmentation graphic completely surrounds the permanent character graphic.
10. The absorbent article of claim 8, further comprising a permanent object graphic that is interactively interrelated with the permanent character graphic, wherein the segmentation graphic at least partially surrounds both the permanent character graphic and the permanent object graphic.
11. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, further comprising at least one visual segmentation element disposed on the outer cover and comprising a segmentation graphic that at least partially surrounds the active object graphic.
12. The absorbent article of claim 11, wherein the segmentation graphic completely surrounds the active object graphic.
13. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, further comprising at least one visual segmentation element disposed on the outer cover and comprising a segmentation graphic formed of a substantially continuous line segment.
14. The absorbent article of claim 13, wherein the line segment is curved.
15. The absorbent article of claim 13, wherein the line segment is generally perpendicular to an imaginary line connecting the permanent character graphic and the active object graphic.
16. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, further comprising at least one visual segmentation element disposed on the outer cover and comprising a background color graphic.

17. The absorbent article of claim 16, wherein the visual segmentation element further comprises a segmentation graphic that at least partially surrounds the permanent character graphic.
18. The absorbent article of claim 16, wherein the visual segmentation element further comprises a segmentation graphic formed of a substantially continuous line segment that is generally perpendicular to an imaginary line connecting the permanent character graphic and the active object graphic.
19. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, further comprising at least one visual segmentation element disposed on the outer cover and comprising a defined floor graphic, the permanent character graphic being illustrated positioned on the defined floor graphic.
20. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the active object graphic is in liquid communication with the absorbent assembly and comprises an ink that is soluble in urine.
21. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the active object graphic is in liquid communication with the absorbent assembly and comprises an ink that changes color when exposed to urine.
22. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the active object graphic is in liquid communication with the absorbent assembly and comprises an appearing graphic that becomes significantly more visible when exposed to urine.
23. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the active object graphic comprises an appearing graphic that becomes significantly more visible when exposed to an environment during use and prior to contact with urine.
24. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the permanent character graphic is disposed on the exterior surface of the outer cover and the active object graphic is disposed on the interior surface of the outer cover.
26. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the active object graphic is disposed on a surface of the absorbent assembly that faces the outer cover.

30. The absorbent article of claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the absorbent article defines a longitudinal centerline, a transverse centerline, opposite first and second longitudinal end edges, first and second waist regions abutting the respective first and second longitudinal end edges, and a crotch region disposed between and interconnecting the first and second waist regions, the permanent character graphic being disposed in the first waist region and the active object graphic being disposed in the crotch region.
31. The absorbent article of claim 30, wherein the active object graphic is longitudinally disposed between the permanent character graphic and the transverse centerline.
38. A disposable training pant defining a longitudinal centerline, a transverse centerline, opposite first and second longitudinal end edges, first and second waist regions abutting the respective first and second longitudinal end edges, and a crotch region disposed between and interconnecting the first and second waist regions, the absorbent article comprising:
- an outer cover having an interior surface and an opposite exterior surface;
 - an absorbent assembly disposed on the interior surface;
 - a permanent character graphic disposed on the outer cover in the first waist region;
 - a permanent object graphic disposed on the outer cover in the first waist region, the permanent character graphic illustrated to be involved in an activity or action utilizing the permanent object graphic;
 - an active object graphic disposed on the outer cover in the crotch region and in liquid communication with the absorbent assembly, both the permanent character graphic and the permanent object graphic being unrelated in subject matter to the active object graphic, and the permanent character graphic being interactively unrelated to the active object graphic; and
 - a visual segmentation element disposed between the permanent character graphic and the active object graphic
39. The absorbent article of claim 38, wherein the active object graphic comprises an ink that is soluble in urine.
40. The absorbent article of claim 38, wherein the active object graphic comprises an ink that changes color when exposed to urine.



Serial No.: 09/928,785
Docket No.: 14,966.1
Title: Absorbent Articles Having Wetness Indicating Graphics
Incorporating A Training Zone
Inventors: Mark T. Cammarota et al.

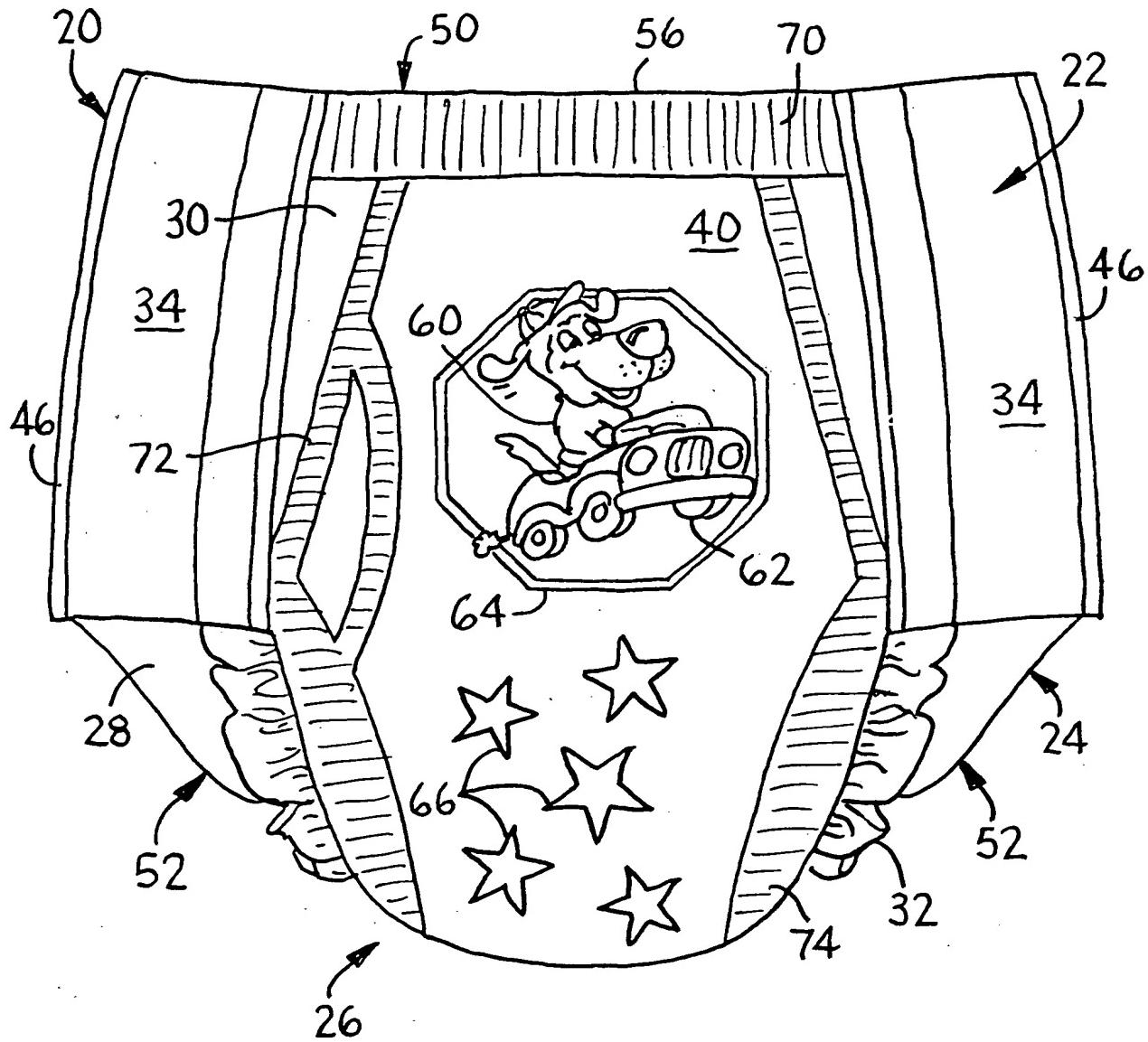


FIG. 1



Serial No.: 09/928,785
Docket No.: 14,966.1
Title: Absorbent Articles Having Wetness Indicating Graphics
Incorporating A Training Zone
Inventors: Mark T. Cammarota et al.

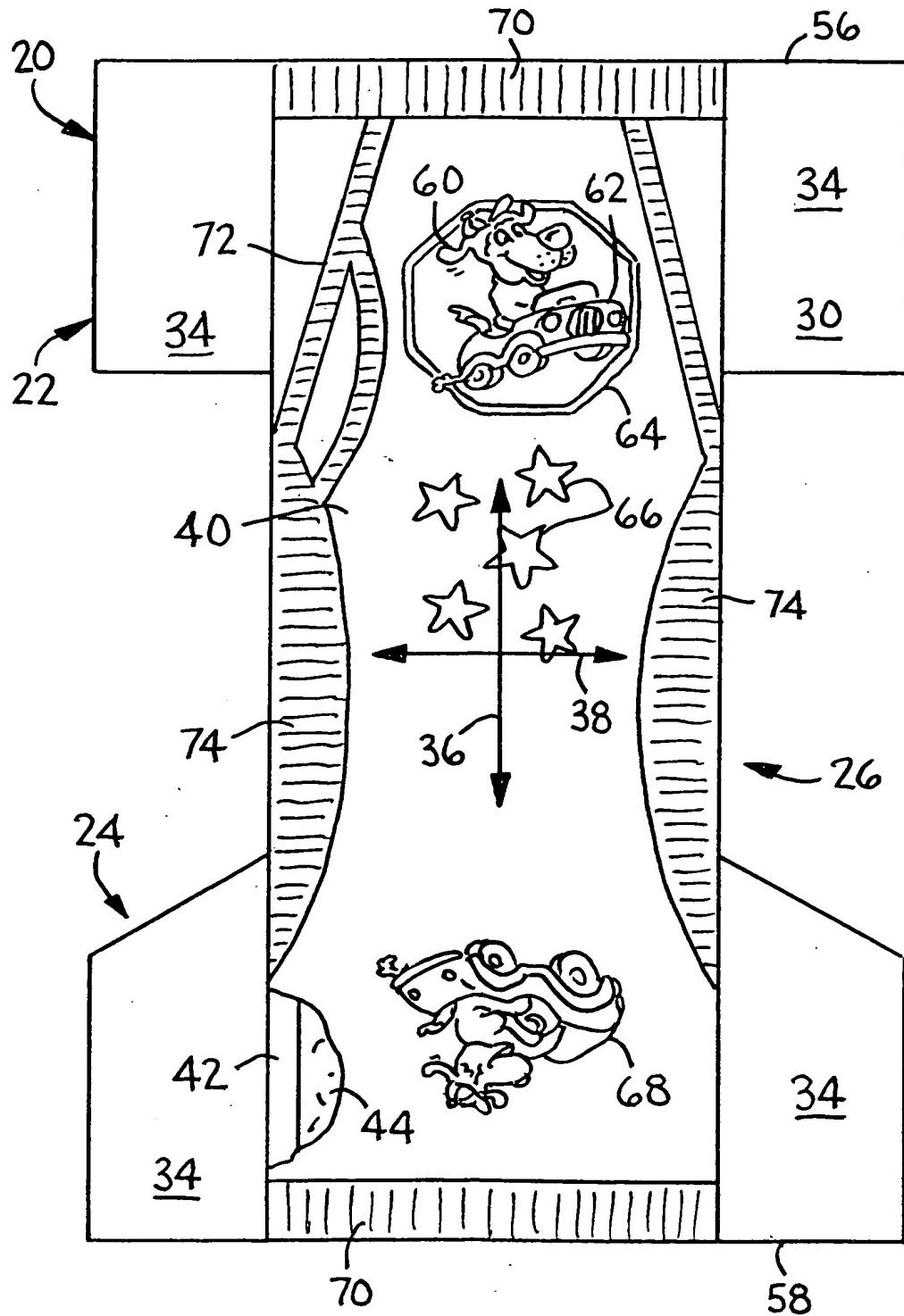


FIG. 2

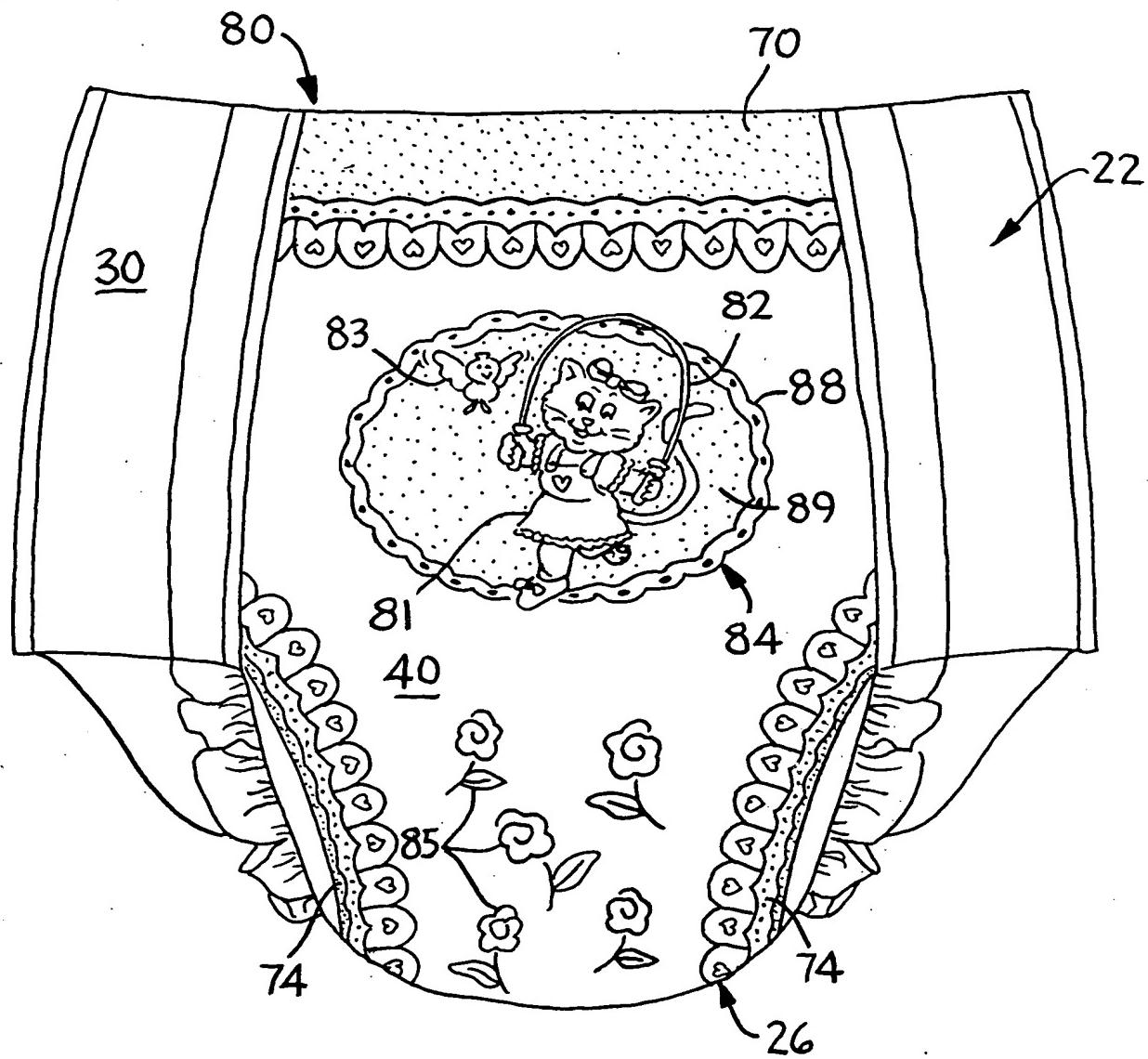


FIG. 3



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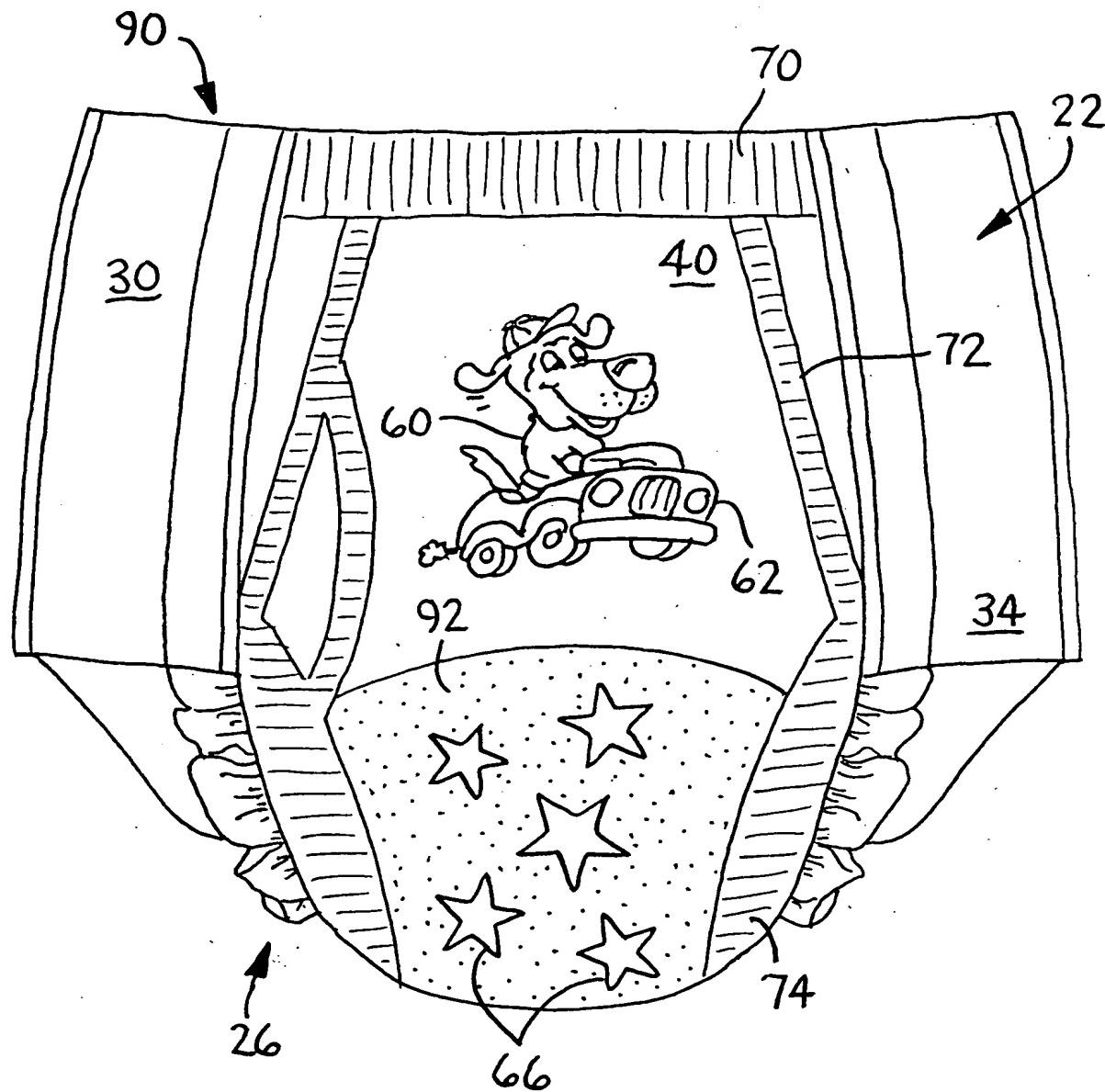


FIG. 4

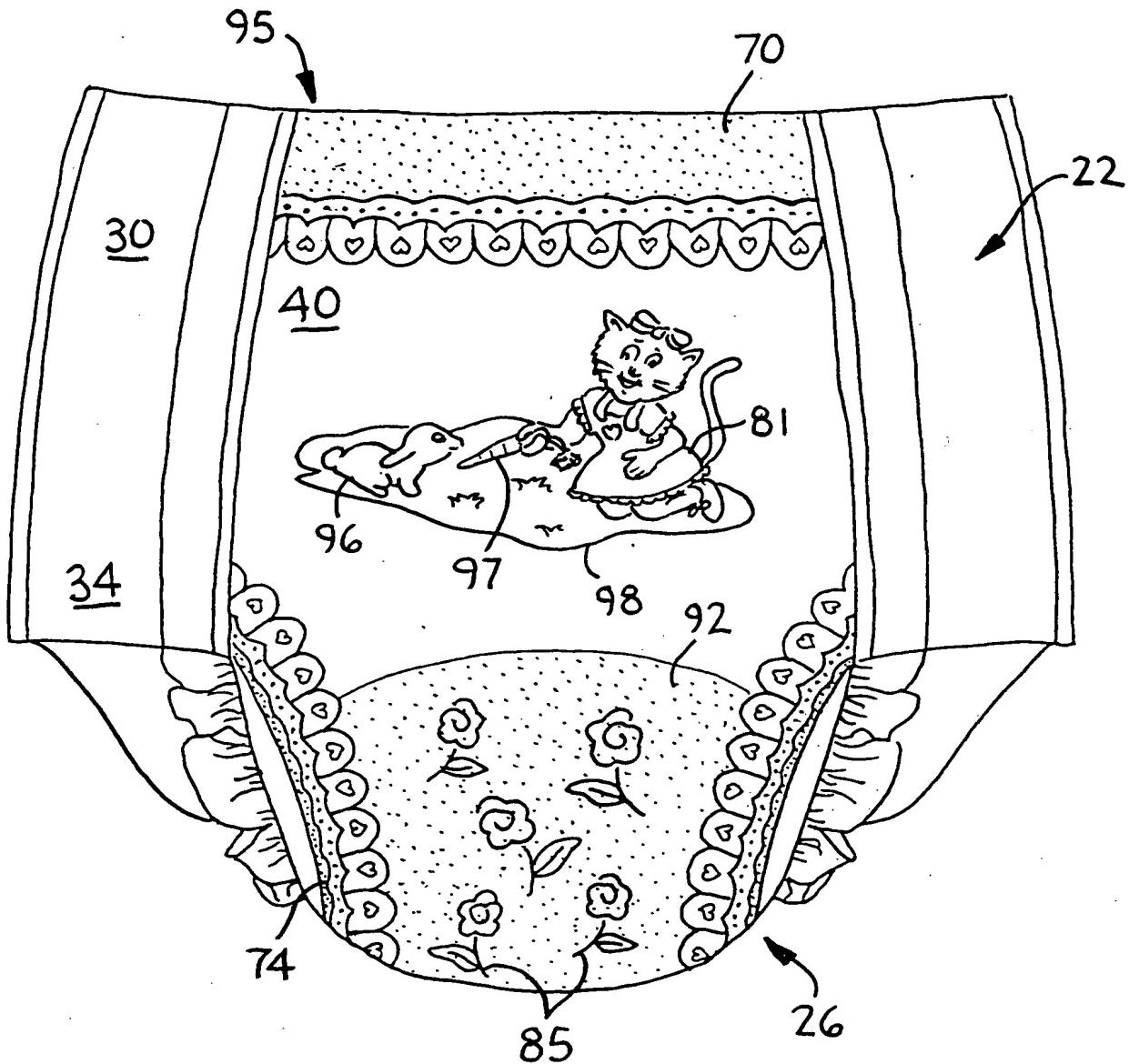


FIG. 5

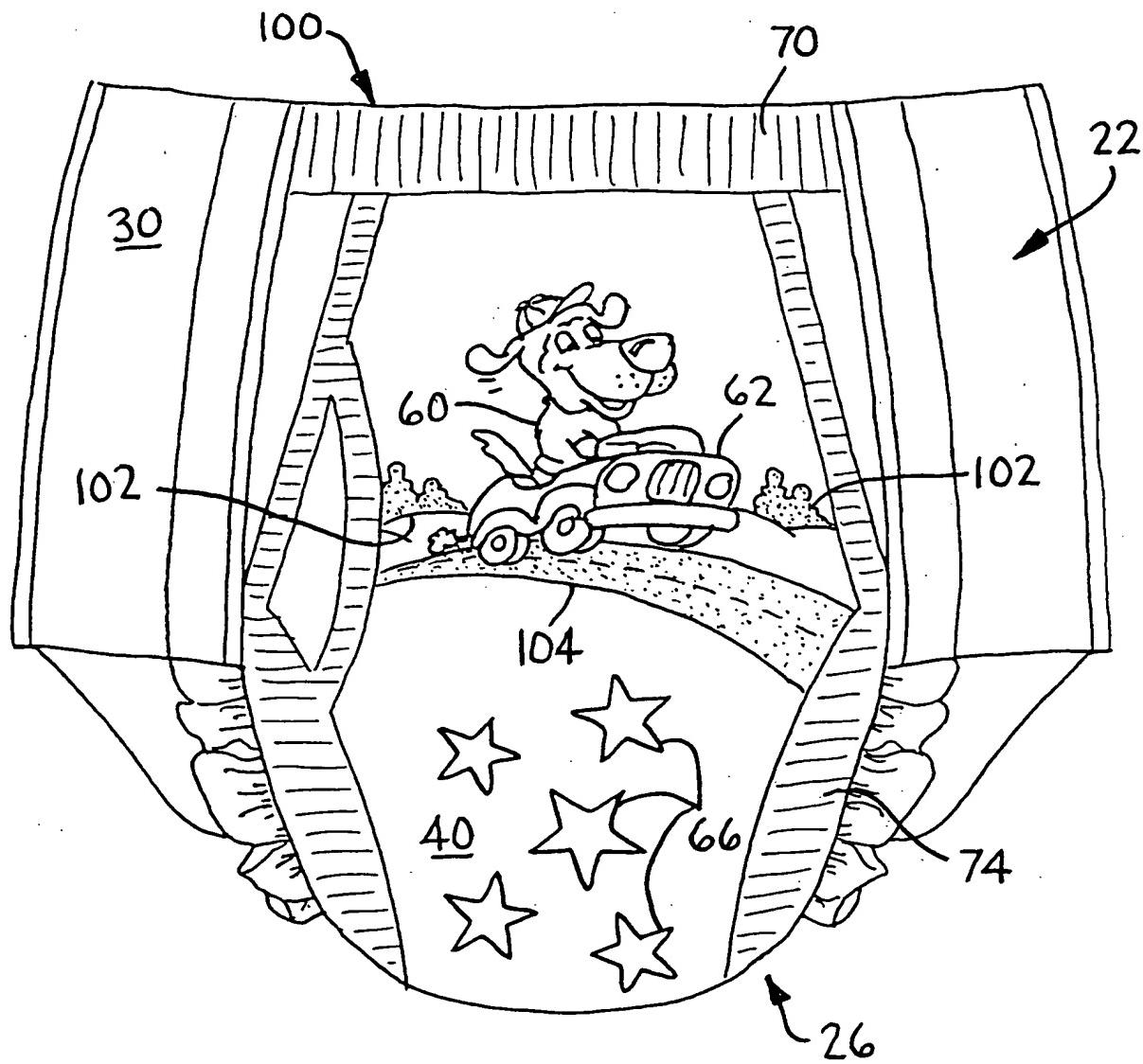


FIG. 6

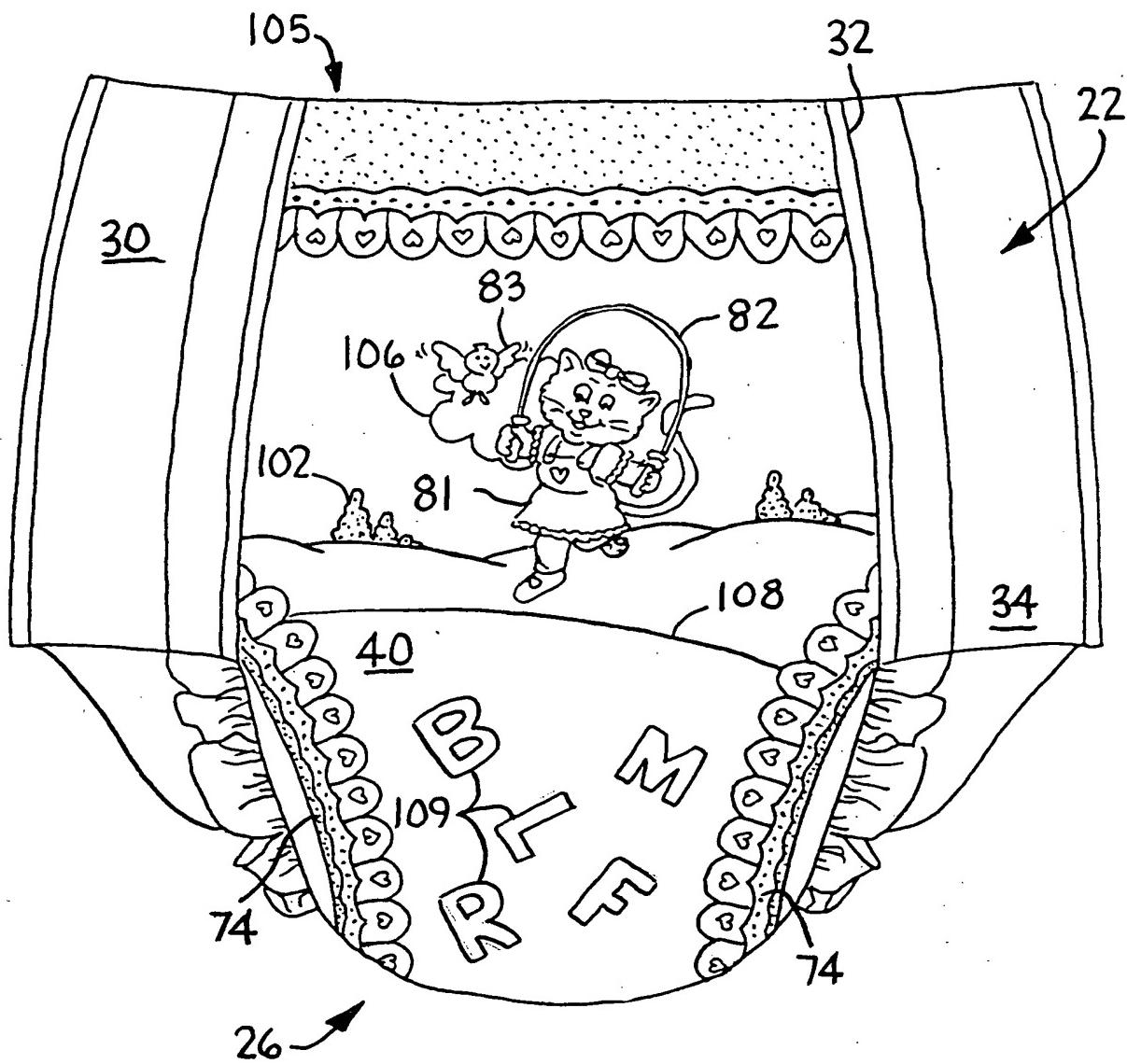


FIG. 7

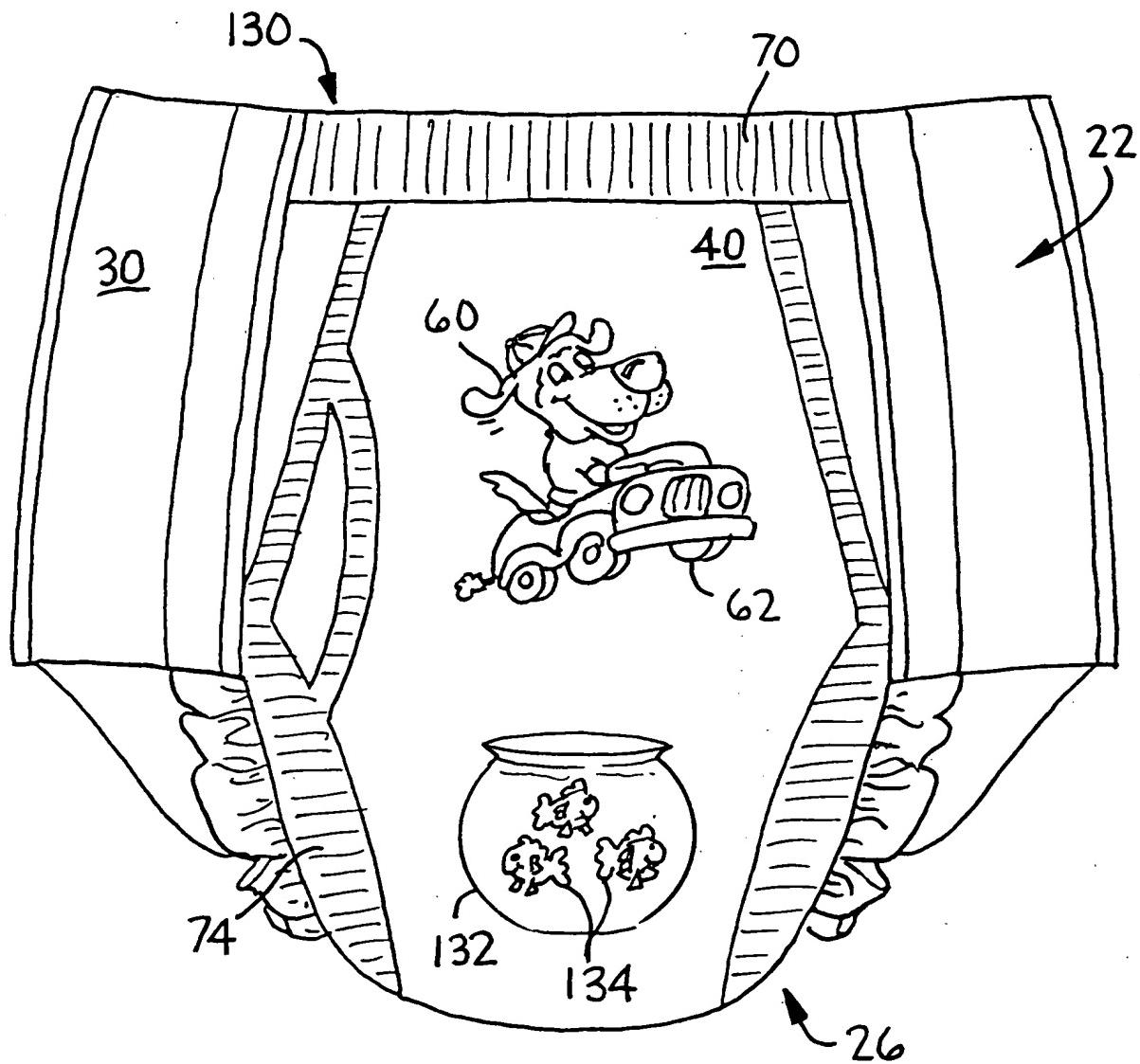


FIG. 8



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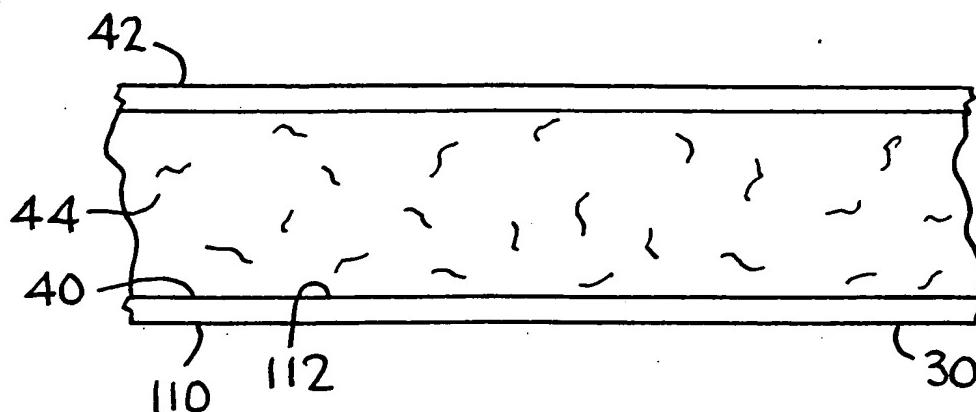


FIG. 9A

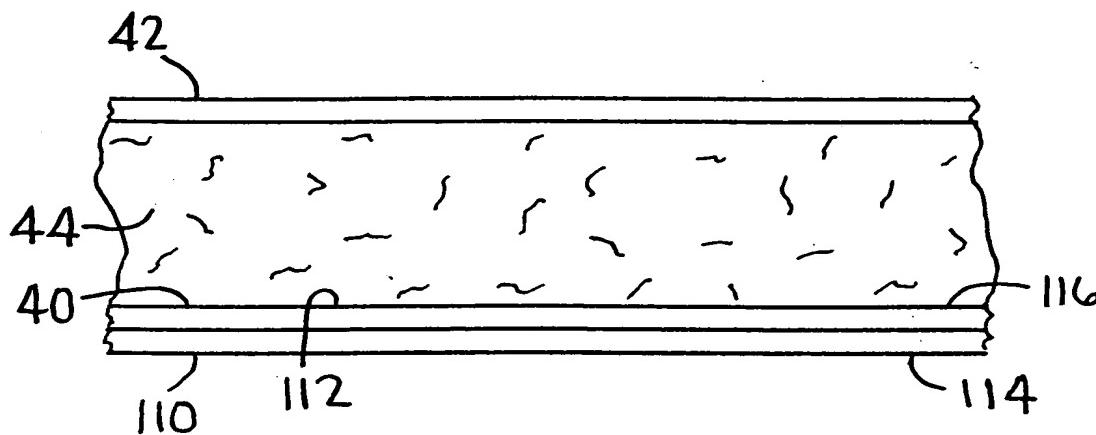


FIG. 9B

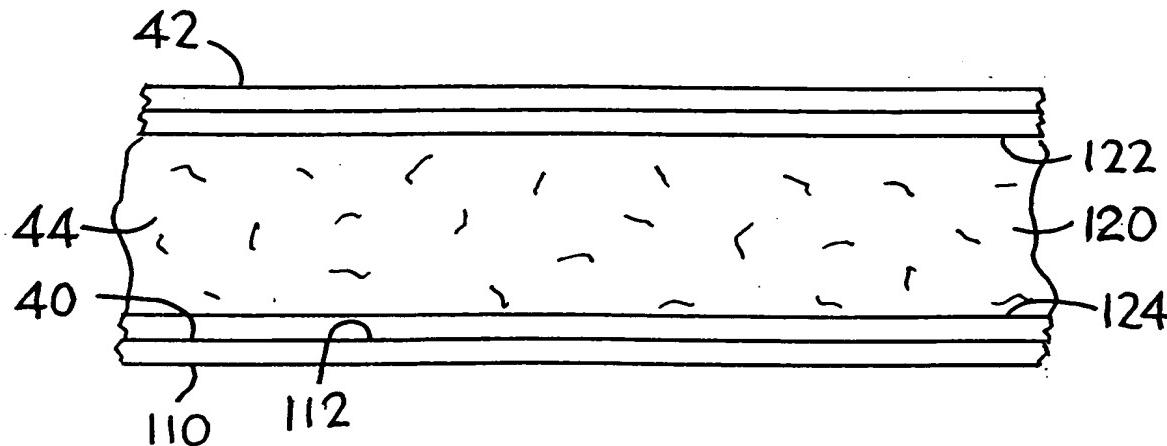


FIG. 9C